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ABSTRACT

The 1979-80 South Carolina Statewide Testing Program assessed the achievement of students in public school grades 3, 6, and 11. Results were used to facilitate the decision-making process of educators at the state, district, and school levels. The Comprehensive Tests of Basic Skills (CTBS) were used to measure achievement in the basic skill areas of reading, language, mathematics, reference skills, science, and social studies. For the fourth consecutive year, two levels of the CTBS were administered to grades 3 and 6. All 92 school districts participated in the program at all three grade levels. In all three grades, more than 40% of the students scored above the national average in language, science, and social studies. The lowest performance for all three grades was in mathematics. In reading, 46.8% of grade 3 students exceeded the national average, as did 43.8% of grade 6 students and 36.0% of grade 11 students. The highest average scores were recorded by grades 3 and 6 in science, and by grade 6 in reference skills. (RL)

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SOUTH CAROLINA STATEWIDE TESTING PROGRAM 1979-80

SUMMARY REPORT

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SOUTH CAROLINA STATEWIDE TESTING PROGRAM 1979-80

SUMMARY REPORT

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PREFACE

This summary report is intended to provide answers to questions that local school personnel and others may have about the 1979-80 South Carolina Statewide Testing Program. These questions primarily center on the operation and results of the testing program.

In Appendix A, tables of the State's 1979-80 results are presented for All Students and Title I Students in Grades 3, 6, and 11.

ABSTRACT

The primary purpose of the 1979-80 Statewide Testing Program was to assess the achievement of 3rd, 6th, and 11th grade students in South Carolina's public schools. The results from the Statewide Testing Program provide educators with information which facilitates the decision-making process at the State, district, and school levels.

A standardized norm-referenced test, the Comprehensive Tests of Basic Skills, Form S (CTBS/S), was the instrument used to measure achievement in the basic skill areas of Reading, Language, Mathematics, Reference Skills, Science, and Social Studies.

For the fourth consecutive year, two levels of the test were administered in each of the two elementary grades, Grade 3 and Grade 6. Either Level C or Level 1 of the CTBS/S was administered to 3rd grade students on an individual student basis; either Level 1 or Level 2 of the CTBS/S was administered to 6th grade students on an individual student basis; and Level 4 of the CTBS/S was administered to all 11th grade students.

Because of changes in the testing program before 1976-77, the 1979-80 testing results should be compared only to the 1976-77, 1977-78, and 1978-79 results. One reason for the lack of comparability between results before 1976-77 and the results after 1976-77 was the change in test administration from Fall to Spring, beginning with the 1976-77 program. With the change from Fall to Spring testing, the lower two grades tested were changed from Grade 4 to Grade 3 and from Grade 7 to Grade 6. Additionally, the change from sample testing to universe testing in Grade 11 occurred in the 1976-77 program.

All 92 South Carolina school districts participated in the 1979-80 Statewide Testing Program at all three grade levels. Tested as part of the 1979-80 Statewide Testing Program during the last two weeks of March were 134,861 South Carolina 3rd, 6th, and 11th graders. At Grade 3, 48,873 students were tested; at Grade 6, 45,700 students were tested; and, at Grade 11, 40,288 students were tested.

In all three grades, more than 40 percent of South Carolina's students scored above the national average in the skill areas of Language, Science, and Social Studies. The lowest performance for all three grades was in Mathematics.

In the area of Reading, 46.8 percent of South Carolina's 3rd graders surpassed the national average; while 43.8 percent of the 6th graders and 36.0 percent of the 11th graders exceeded the national average.

In the area of Language, 50.0 percent of South Carolina's 3rd graders, 46.6 percent of the 6th graders, and 41.4 percent of the 11th graders scored above the national average.

In Mathematics, 44.9 percent of the 3rd graders scored above the national average with 39.8 percent of the 6th graders and 34.6 percent of the 11th graders scoring above the national average.

The highest average scores for South Carolina's students were recorded by 3rd and 6th graders in the area of Science and by 6th graders in the area of Reference Skills. In Science, 51.2 percent of the 3rd graders and 50.6 percent of the 6th graders scored above the national average. In Reference Skills, 52.7 percent of the 6th graders in South Carolina scored above the national average. In the area of Language, 50.0 percent of the 3rd graders scored above the national average.

Third grade students consistently outperformed 6th and 11th grade students relative to their national normative groups in the three basic skill areas of Reading, Language, and Mathematics. Third graders also outscored 6th and 11th graders in Science and Social Studies.

Although a number of South Carolina's scores on the average were below the national sample of students, a substantial number of South Carolina students at each grade level scored well above the national average. In view of the fact that the characteristics of the national sample differ considerably from the characteristics of students in South Carolina in terms of socioeconomic status and other factors, the results from the 1979-80 Statewide Testing Program appear encouraging.

Further encouragement came from a comparison made between 1980 6th graders and the same students as 3rd graders in 1977. All skill areas and Battery Total test scores reflected improved perfonmance. When compared with 1977 3rd graders, increased percentages above the 50th national percentile for 1980 6th graders were 7.6 percent in Science, 3.6 percent in Language, 3.4 percent in Reading and Mathematics, 3.2 percent in Battery Total, and 1.9 percent in Social Studies.

With the exception of a slight decline in 6th grade Science, this year's student performance for 3rd and 6th graders showed improvement over last year's performances for 3rd and 6th grade students.

For 3rd graders, 1.9 percent more students scored above the national average in the area of Language when compared with last year's results and 1.0 percent more in Reading. An increase of 0.6 percent was evidenced in the areas of Mathematics and Social Studies.

When compared with last year, additional percentages of 6th grade students performing above the national average were 1.6 percent in Reference Skills, 1.3 percent in Mathematics, 1.2 percent in Language, and 1.1 percent in Reading. Increases in Battery Total and Social Studies were 1.0 percent and 0.7 percent, respectively; while Science decreased 0.1 percent.

This year's 11th grade performance was also slightly higher overall than last year's performance except for the skill areas of Reading and Reference Skills. Declines were 0.4 percent in Reading and 0.1 percent in Reference Skills. The improvements ranged from 0.1 percent in Battery Total to 0.9 percent in Mathematics.

WHAT IS THE STATEWIDE TESTING PROGRAM?

The South Carolina Statewide Testing Program is designed to assess the achievement of students in South Carolina public schools. The State Department of Education through the Educational Assessment Section, Office of Research, is responsible for coordinating the Statewide Testing Program at the State level; while the District Test Coordinator is responsible for coordinating the Statewide Testing Program at the local level. The actual administration of the tests to the students is conducted by classroom teachers.

The groundwork for the Statewide Testing Program was laid in accordance with the Federal regulations for Title III of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act during the Year 1970-71. The regulation stated:

> The State Plan shall set forth a program for testing students in the elementary and secondary schools of the state...which describes the means of testing, including the types of tests and grade levels of students.

The South Carolina State Plan provided for the testing of student achievement at grade levels designated by the State Department of Education. The Comprehensive Tests of Basic Skills, Form S (CTBS/S), was adopted by the Department as the achievement test to be administered in the 1973-74 Statewide Testing Program; and the use of the CTBS/S has been continued through the 1979-80 Statewide Testing Program.

WHAT ARE THE PURPOSES OF THE STATEWIDE TESTING PROGRAM?

The primary purpose of the Statewide Testing Program is to provide a means of monitoring student achievement in South Carolina public schools. Within the State Department of Education, the testing program results are used in the evaluation of the Basic Skills Major Objective which is included in South Carolina's Five Year Plan for Continuous Upgrading of Education. Equally important, the test results provide educators with information which facilitates the decision-making process at the State, district, and school levels. Concurrently, the Statewide Testing Program provides a service to districts in that the program funds relieve a portion of the financial burden of the district testing programs and, in many

districts, constitutes a major part of the districtwide testing programs. Since the spring administration of the program coincides with Title I testing, the testing program further services districts by supplementing testing for Title I program evaluations.

WHAT WERE THE OBJECTIVES OF THE 1979-80 STATEWIDE TESTING PROGRAM?

The objectives of the Statewide Testing Program were originally established in 1970-71 as part of the 4th grade testing program. These objectives, however, have been modified over the past eight years to reflect the yearly changes in the testing program. Following are the objectives for the 1979-80 testing program:

1. to provide a valid measure of student achievement in the basic skill areas of Reading, Language, Mathematics, Science, and Social Studies in Grade 3;
2. to provide a valid measure of student achievement in the basic skill areas of Reading, Language, Mathematics, Reference Skills, Science, and Social Studies in Grades 6 and 11;
3. to compare the achievement of 3rd, 6th, and 11th grade students in South Carolina with the achievement of 3rd, 6th, and 11th grade students in the nation, using the national normative data provided by the test publisher;
4. to determine the achievement levels of students in Grades 3, 6, and 11 in order to assist in the development of instructional objectives and to evaluate the degree of effectiveness of these objectives;
5. to fulfill the requirements of the Basic Skills Major Objective as specified in South Carolina's Five-Year Plan for Continuous Upgrading of Education;
6. to provide a measure of educational quality in South Carolina public schools; and
7. to encourage effective utilization of test data in guidance and instructional programs in Grades 3, 6, and 11.

WHO PARTICIPATED IN THE 1979-80 STATEWIDE TESTING PROGRAM?

The State Department of Educatio designated Grades 3, 6, and 11 as the grades to be tested in the 1979-80 Statewide Testing Program. All 9[illegible] South Carolina school disticts participated in the testing program at Grades 3, 6, and 11 as required by the South Carolina Educational Finance Act of 1977.

Students enrolled in programs for the handicapped were included in the Statewide Testing Program unless their Individual Education Plans (IEP's) indicated that their participation would be inappropriate.

As part of the 1979-80 Statewide Testing Program, 134,861 South Carolina 3rd, 6th, and 11th grade students were tested. Tested at the 3rd grade level were 48,873 students. At the 6th grade level, 4[illegible],700 students were tested; and at the 11th grade level, 40,288 students were tested.

WHAT TEST WAS USED IN THE 1979-80 STATEWIDE TESTING PROGRAM?

The Comprehensive Tests of Basic Skills, Form S (CTBS/S), published by CTB/McGraw-Hill, was used in the 1979-80 Statewide Testing Program. The CTBS/S was administered to measure student achievement in the basic skill areas of Reading, Mathematics, Language, Reference Skills, Science, and Social Studies. Levels C and 1 of the CTBS/S were administered in Grade 3 on an individual student basis; Levels 1 and 2 of the CTBS/S were administered in Grade 6 on an individual student basis; and Level 4 of the CTBS/S was administered universally in Grade 11. The administration of two different levels of the test in Grades 3 and 6 was a consequence of the implementation of functional-level testing in these grades.

HOW WAS FUNCTIONAL-LEVEL TESTING DEFINED AND IMPLEMENTED?

Functional-level testing was defined as administering a lower level of a test than the level normally recommended by the test publisher. The rationale behind implementing functional-level testing was that a test level compatible with the abilities of the students should be used. To be able to implement functional-level testing, two characteristics of a test are necessary: (1) the two levels of the test must be comparable in

content and (2) a system must exist for converting scores on one test level to scores on the other test level. Since the levels of the CTBS/S were constructed to be comparable in content and to have scale scores which allow numerical comparisons across test levels, the CTBS/S could be used for functional-level testing purposes.

The decision to implement functional-level testing in Grades 3 and 6 was initially made in 1976-77 as a result of reviewing the Fall 1975 CTBS/S data for Grades 4 and 7. In the Fall 1975 testing program, Levels 1 and 2 of the CTBS/S were administered universally in Grades 4 and 7, respectively. Level 1 is the level of the test normally recommended by the publisher for use in Grade 4, and Level 2 is a lower level of the test than the level normally recommended by the publisher for use in Grade 7. However, the Fall 1975 test results indicated that large percentages of 4th and 7th graders were scoring at or below a chance level. A probable reason for this phenomenon was that the levels utilized were too difficult for a large number of South Carolina 4th and 7th grade students and, hence, were providing very little information on achievement for some students. This observation suggested, that in order for meaningful measurement to be obtained on 3rd and 6th graders, the use of test levels more compatible with the abilities of the students was necessary.

The implementation of functional-level testing continued for Grades 3 and 6 from initial use in the 1976-77 Statewide Testing Program through 1979-80. For the 1976-77, 1977-78, and 1978-79 Statewide Testing Programs, functional-level testing was administered on a school basis. However, the 1979-80 Statewide Testing Program offered functional-level testing on an individual student basis.

For the 1979-80 Statewide Testing Program, an important change allowed districts the option of using functional-level testing on an individual student basis in Grades 3 and 6. Functional-level testing on an individual student basis means that the appropriate level of the test is selected for each student. At Grade 3, the functional-level test of the CTBS/S was Level C; and the on-level test was Level 1; while at Grade 6, the functional-level test was Level 1; and the on-level test was defined as Level 2.

The Department of Education recommended a criterion for those districts utilizing functional-level testing on an individual student basis. The

recommended criterion was based on the student's previous year's CTBS/S reading test data. Those students scoring above the 20th national percentile on the previous year's CTBS/S Reading Total would take the on-level test, and those students scoring at or below the 20th national percentile were recommended to take the functional-level test. In the absence of CTBS/S reading test data, decisions would be made by local school personnel.

WHAT WERE THE MAJOR CHANGES IN THE 1979-80 STATEWIDE TESTING PROGRAM?

The 1979-80 Statewide Testing Program represented the fourth year of the administration of the testing program under the guidelines of the 1976-77 Statewide Testing Program. The 1976-77 Statewide Testing Program established a new baseline year in terms of test comparisons because of changes in test administration time, student populations tested, and the testing instrumentation. In 1979-80, for the fourth year, South Carolina 3rd, 6th, and 11th grade students were administered the Comprehensive Tests of Basic Skills, Form S (CTBS/S), using the functional-level testing approach. As a result of functional-level testing, students in Grade 3 were administered either Level C or Level 1; and students in Grade 6 were administered either Level 1 or Level 2. An important modification in 1979-80 allowed school districts the option of functional-level testing on an individual student basis.

Two other changes in the testing program were in effect for the second year. One change was the move from voluntary participation by districts to required district participation (South Carolina Education Finance Act of 1977). A second change was the move to scoring the consumable test booklets (Grade 3) and answer sheets (Grades 6 and 11) within the Department. Neither of these two changes affect the comparison of 1978-79 and 1979-80 results with the 1976-77 and 1977-78 results.

SHOULD THE RESULTS OF THE 1979-80 STATEWIDE TESTING PROGRAM BE COMPARED WITH THE RESULTS OF PREVIOUS YEARS?

The operation of the 1979-80 Statewide Testing Program was consistent with the 1976-77, 1977-78, and 1979-80 Statewide Testing Programs.

Therefore, comparisons of student performances for the four years are possible. The 1976-77, 1977-78, and 1978-79 Statewide Testing Programs embodied the major changes that were also reflected in the 1979-80 Statewide Testing Program. The changes, which could have possibly affected the test results, were the move from Fall testing in 1975 to Spring testing in 1977 and the implementation of functional-level testing in Grades 3 and 6 in 1977.

For all grades tested, the change from Fall to Spring testing affects comparisons of the performances of South Carolina students in the Years 1976-77, 1977-78, 1978-79, and 1979-80 with the performances of South Carolina students in the Years 1973-74, 1974-75, and 1975-76. In addition to affecting the comparisons of the last four years' test data with previous years' test data, the move to functional-level testing in Grades 3 and 6 resulted in problems associated with comparing data for the various subtests on the two levels of the test used in each grade. Therefore, although both changes tend to provide a more accurate picture of the performance of South Carolina students, both changes contribute to the lack of comparability between the Spring data from 1977, 1978, 1979, and 1980 and the Fall data from 1973, 1974, and 1975.

WHAT TYPES OF QUESTIONS CAN THE RESULTS OF THE STATEWIDE TESTING PROGRAM ASSIST IN ANSWERING?

The CTBS/S results can be used to assist educational decision makers in answering questions such as the following:

1. How does the achievement of an individual student in a given grade compare with the achievement of other students at the same grade level in his class, in the school, in the district, in the state, or in the nation?;

2. How does the achievement of a class at a given grade compare with the achievement of other classes in the school, with the achievement of the school as a whole, with the achievement of the district as a whole, with the achievement of the state as a whole, or with the achievement of the nation as a whole?;

3. How does the achievement of a school in a given grade compare with the achievement of other schools within the district, with the achievement of the district as a whole, with the achievement of the state as a whole, or with the achievement of the nation as a whole?;

4. How does the achievement of the district in a given grade compare with the achievement of the state as a whole or the achievement of the nation as a whole?; and

5. Of the content and skill areas included on the CTBS/S, in which content or skill area is achievement weakest (strongest) relative to some norm group?.

HOW WERE THE RESULTS OF THE 1979-80 STATEWIDE TESTING PROGRAM REPORTED?

The results of the 1979-80 Statewide Testing Program were provided for individual students, classes, schools, districts, and the State in the form of CTBS/S score reports. The test scores on the CTBS/S score reports are explained in the CTBS/S Examiner's Manual (all levels). The following chart presents an overview of the score reports provided and the various types of test scores that were included on these CTBS/S score reports.

Test Scores Included on Each CTBS/S Score Report

Score Report	Scores[a]										
	RS	SS	NP	LP	NQ	NS	GE	NCE	%R	%W	%O
Individual Test Record with Home Report		X	X			X					
Class Record Sheet		X	X			X	X				
Right Response Summary and Item Analysis									X	X	X
Frequency Distribution		X	X	X	X						
Evaluator's Summary		X	X		X		X	X			

[a]RS = Raw Score
SS = Scale Score
NP = National Percentile
LP = Local Percentile
NQ = National Quarters
NS = National Stanine
GE = Grade Equivalent
NCE = Normal Curve Equivalent
%R = Percent of Items Answered Right
%W = Percent of Items Answered Wrong
%O = Percent of Items Omitted

FOR WHICH SKILL AREAS WERE TEST SCORES REPORTED?

The school results for the two different test levels used in a given grade were combined to obtain school and district summary results for both levels of the CTBS/S. Therefore, in Grade 3, the results for Level C and Level 1 students were combined; and, in Grade 6, the results for Level 1 and Level 2 students were combined. However, the combined 3rd grade district and school summary results are not available for the following:

Reading Comprehension Subtest,

Mathematics Concepts Subtest,

Mathematics Applications Subtest, and

Reference Skills Test.

The following test and subtest scores were reported on each of the CTBS/S score reports provided for the various test levels.

1. Reading Vocabulary Subtest (All Levels)
2. Reading Comprehension Subtest (Levels 1, 2, and 4 only)
3. Reading Comprehension: Sentences Subtest (Level C only)
4. Reading Comprehension: Passages Subtest (Level C only)
5. Reading Total (All Levels)
6. Spelling Subtest (All Levels)
7. Language Mechanics Subtest (All Levels)
8. Language Expression Subtest (All Levels)
9. Language Total (All Levels)
10. Mathematics Computation Subtest (All Levels)
11. Mathematics Concepts and Applications (Level C only)
12. Mathematics Concepts Subtest (Levels 1, 2, and 4 only)
13. Mathematics Applications Subtest (Levels 1, 2, and 4 only)
14. Mathematics Total (All Levels)
15. Battery Total (All Levels)

16. Reference Skills (Levels 1, 2, and 4 only)
17. Science (All Levels)
18. Social Studies (All Levels)

Thus, test and subtest scores were provided for 14 different areas on the score reports for Level C and 15 different areas on the score reports for Levels 1, 2, and 4. Note that the 14 areas on the Level C score reports were slightly different from the 15 areas on the Levels 1, 2, and 4 score reports as explained previously because of functional level testing.

HOW DID THE PERFORMANCE OF STUDENTS IN SOUTH CAROLINA COMPARE WITH THE PERFORMANCE OF STUDENTS IN THE NATION?

For each of the three grade levels tested in the 1979-80 South Carolina Statewide Testing Program, comparisons between the performance of students in South Carolina and the performance of students in the nation can be made. In this section, South Carolina Spring 1980 test scores for the skill areas at each grade level are compared to national test scores, using median national percentiles.

1980 Student Performance in Grade 3

In Table 1, the Spring 1980 median national percentiles for 3rd graders in South Carolina are presented.

Table 1

Median National Percentiles for South Carolina

Grade 3

Skill Area	1980 State Median	National Median
Reading Total	47.4	50.0
Language Total	50.5	50.0
Mathematics Total	46.5	50.0
Battery Total	47.4	50.0
Reference Skills[a]	NA	NA
Science	50.8	50.0
Social Studies	48.2	50.0

[a]Since Level C of the CTBS/S does not contain a Reference Skills Test, combined data are not available for Reference Skills.

The median or middle score for the national group is the 50th national percentile. Thus, the median national percentile reported for Reading Total, for example, indicates that the middle score for South Carolina 3rd grade students was similar to the 47th national percentile score. If the performance of South Carolina 3rd grade students had been at or above the national average in Reading Total, South Carolina 3rd graders would have scored at or above the 50th national percentile.

As indicated in Table 1, the 1980 performance of South Carolina 3rd grade students was slightly above the national median for the two skill areas of Science and Language Total; while the performance on the other skill areas and Battery Total was below the national median. The Spring 1979 national percentiles indicate that Science (50.8) and Language Total (50.5) represented the highest areas of performance, followed closely by Social Studies (48.2), Reading Total (47.4), Battery Total (47.4), and Mathematics Total (46.5). The skill area of lowest performance for South Carolina 3rd grade students was Mathematics.

1980 Student Performance in Grade 6

The median national percentiles for South Carolina Grade 6 students are presented in Table 2.

Table 2

Median National Percentiles for South Carolina

Grade 6

Skill Area	1980 State Median	National Median
Reading Total	45.6	50.0
Language Total	46.9	50.0
Mathematics Total	43.2	50.0
Battery Total	43.7	50.0
Reference Skills	56.7	50.0
Science	50.7	50.0
Social Studies	45.4	50.0

Table 2 indicates that the Spring 1980 performance of South Carolina 6th grade students was above the national median in two of the six skill areas. Reference Skills with a median national percentile of 56.7 was the skill area of highest performance for South Carolina 6th graders, and Science with a median national percentile of 50.7 was second highest. In the other four skill areas and Battery Total, performance was below the national median. In order of highest to lowest performance, the median performances for the other five areas were Language Total (46.9), Reading Total (45.6), Social Studies (45.4), Battery Total (43.7), and Mathematics Total (43.2). As in the 3rd grade, Mathematics with a median national percentile of 43.2 was the weakest skill area.

1980 Student Performance in Grade 11

The median national percentiles for South Carolina 11th graders are presented in Table 3.

Table 3

Median National Percentiles for South Carolina

Grade 11

Skill Area	1980 State Median	National Median
Reading Total	35.3	50.0
Language Total	39.4	50.0
Mathematics Total	37.3	50.0
Battery Total	33.9	50.0
Reference Skills	41.4	50.0
Science	42.8	50.0
Social Studies	44.4	50.0

As indicated in Table 3, South Carolina 11th grade students scored below the median national percentile in all skill areas. Relative to the nation, the Spring 1980 performance for South Carolina 11th graders was strongest in the skill areas of Social Studies and Science with median national percentiles of 44.4 and 42.8, respectively. The median national percentile for Reference Skills was 41.4, and the median national percentile for Language Total was 39.4. Mathematics Total and Reading Total with median national percentiles of 37.3 and 35.3, respectively, were the weakest skill areas of performance. The median national percentile for Battery Total was 33.9.

OVERALL, HOW DOES THE ACHIEVEMENT OF SOUTH CAROLINA STUDENTS COMPARE ACROSS GRADES?

The comparison of the overall achievement of students across Grades 3, 6, and 11 can be accomplished by a comparison of the Battery Total frequency distributions for each of the three grade levels. These frequency distributions are presented in Figure 1. Frequency polygons, which are graphic representations of frequency distributions, illustrate this comparison. The scale scores along the horizontal axis represent the midpoints of scale score intervals. The percentages of scores falling into each scale score interval are given along the vertical axis. The solid line distribution represents the results for Grade 3, the broken line distribution represents the results for Grade 6, and the dotted line distribution represents the results for Grade 11.

The difference in performance across the three grade levels is clearly illustrated by observing the shapes of the distributions in Figure 1. Although the three distributions are generally bell-shaped, the Grade 3 distribution is less spread out than the Grade 6 distribution; and the Grade 6 distribution is less spread out than the Grade 11 distribution. The increase of score distribution spread from Grade 3 to Grade 6 to Grade 11 suggests that the difference between low and high achievers becomes more distinct as a child progresses along the educational continuum. Thus, as students progress to higher grade levels, the extremes of the distribution elongate. As a result, the distribution spreads out or flattens out, illustrating a greater difference between the high and low achievers.

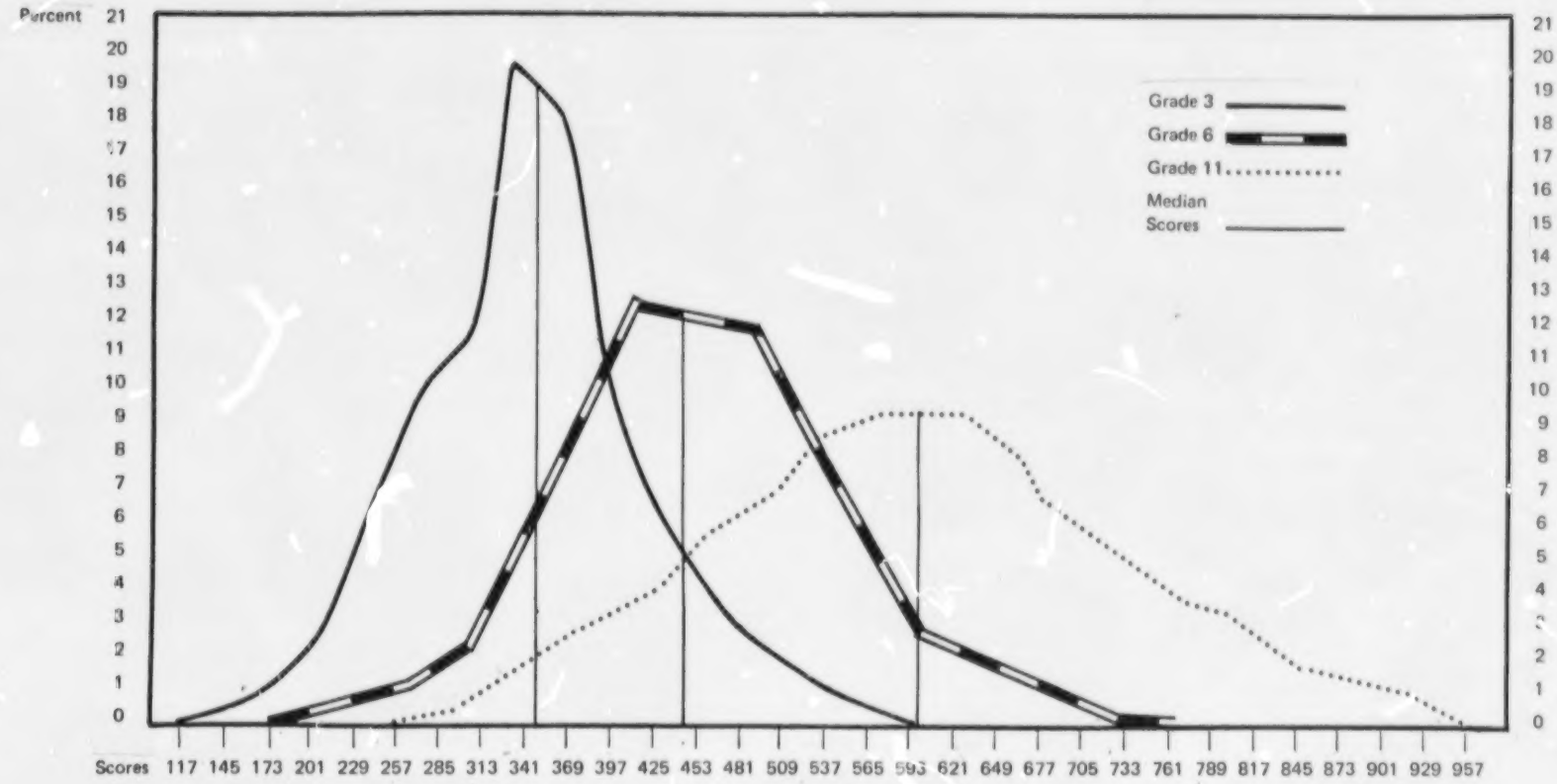

Figure 1

Percent Distribution of Battery Total Scale Scores for Grades 3, 6, and 11

HOW DOES THE SPRING 1980 PERFORMANCE COMPARE WITH THE SPRING 1979 PERFORMANCE FOR SOUTH CAROLINA?

For each grade level, the discussions focus on performance comparisons between the Spring 1980 results and the Spring 1979 results for the CTBS/S skill areas and Battery Total. Performance comparisons are made, using the percentages of South Carolina students scoring above the national median.

Comparison of 1980 and 1979 Performance for Grade 3

The percentages of South Carolina 3rd graders scoring above the national median (the 50th national percentile) are presented in Table 4. Percentages for a particular skill area are obtained by adding the percentages of students scoring in the two upper quarters of the national distribution (the upper quarter and the upper middle quarter). Fifty percent of the nation's 3rd graders scored above the national median. Therefore, if 50 percent of South Carolina 3rd graders scored above the national median, South Carolina would be performing at the national norm. If, however, more than 50 percent of South Carolina 3rd graders scored above the national median, South Carolina would be scoring above the nation.

Table 4

Percentages of South Carolina Students
Scoring above the 50th National Percentile (NP)

Grade 3[a]

Skill Area	% Above 50th NP for Nation	% Above 50th NP for South Carolina	
		1979	1980
Reading Total	50.0%	45.8%	46.8%
Language Total	50.0%	48.1%	50.0%
Mathematics Total	50.0%	44.3%	44.9%
Battery Total	50.0%	44.8%	44.9%
Reference Skills[b]	NA	NA	NA
Science	50.0%	NA[c]	51.2%
Social Studies	50.0%	48.3%	48.9%

[a]n = 48,873. Total number of students completing any part of test battery.

[b]Since Level C of the CTBS/S does not contain a Reference Skills Test, combined data are not available for Reference Skills.

[c]The percentage of students scoring above the 50th national percentile was not available for Science in 1979.

For the first time, South Carolina 3rd graders equalled or excelled the national percentages in two skill areas: Language Total and Science. Performance on all other skill areas and Battery Total increased slightly from Spring 1979 to Spring 1980. The largest change occurred in Language Total which increased 1.9 percent. Other positive changes were 1.0 percent in Reading Total, 0.6 percent in Mathematics Total and Social Studies, and 0.1 percent in Battery Total. Although the lack of Science data from 1979 does not allow a comparison between 1979 and 1980, Science increased 3.5 percent from Spring 1978 to Spring 1980.

Comparison of 1980 and 1979 Performance for Grade 6

The percentages of South Carolina 6th graders scoring above the median national percentile of 50 are presented in Table 5.

Table 5

Percentages of South Carolina Students
Scoring above the 50th National Percentile (NP)

Grade 6[a]

Skill Area	% Above 50th NP for Nation	% Above 50th NP for South Carolina	
		1979	1980
Reading Total	50.0	42.7	43.8
Language Total	50.0	45.4	46.6
Mathematics Total	50.0	38.5	39.8
Battery Total	50.0	41.5	42.5
Reference Skills	50.0	51.1	52.7
Science	50.0	50.7	50.6
Social Studies	50.0	45.1	45.8

[a]n = 45,700. Total number of students completing any part of test battery.

In all skill areas except Science, the percentages of South Carolina 6th graders scoring above the 50th national percentile increased from Spring 1979 to Spring 1980. Reference Skills had the largest increase with 1.6 percent more 6th graders scoring above the national average. Other increases since Spring 1979 included 1.3 percent in Mathematics Total, 1.2 percent in Language Total, 1.1 percent in Reading Total, 1.0 percent in Battery Total, and 0.7 percent in Social Studies. Science had a very slight decrease of 0.1 percent.

Comparison of 1980 and 1979 Performance for Grade 11

The percentages of South Carolina 11th graders scoring above the median national percentile of 50 are presented in Table 6.

Table 6

Percentages of South Carolina Students
Scoring above the 50th National Percentile (NP)

Grade 11[a]

Skill Area	% Above 50th NP for Nation	% Above 50th NP for South Carolina	
		1979	1980
Reading Total	50.0%	36.4%	36.0%
Language Total	50.0%	40.9%	41.4%
Mathematics Total	50.0%	33.7%	34.6%
Battery Total	50.0%	33.5%	33.6%
Reference Skills	50.0%	41.6%	41.5%
Science	50.0%	42.3%	42.6%
Social Studies	50.0%	42.6%	43.1%

[a]n = 40,288. Total number of students completing any part of test battery.

For both years, less than 50 percent of South Carolina students scored above the national median in each skill area. When compared to the Spring 1979 percentages, the Spring 1980 percentages of South Carolina 11th graders scoring above the national median percentile of 50 were slightly higher in all areas except Reading Total and Reference Skills. The increases varied from an increase of 0.9 percent in Mathematics Total to an increase of 0.1 percent in Battery Total. Other increases included 0.5 percent for Language Total and Social Studies and 0.3 percent for Science. Decreases included 0.1 percent in Reference Skills and 0.4 percent in Reading Total.

HOW DOES THE PERFORMANCE OF 3RD GRADERS IN 1977 COMPARE WITH THEIR PERFORMANCE AS 6TH GRADERS IN 1980?

When performance comparisons are made between different years' performances for the same grade, different groups of students are being compared. For example, when contrasting 3rd grade students of 1979 to 3rd grade students of 1980, different groups of students are being contrasted. When the comparison is made between data across grades for the same year, different groups of students are still involved. A more meaningful comparison involves longitudinal comparisons or comparing the same students over time. Unfortunately, longitudinal data are often not available. However, the 1979-80 Statewide Testing Program marks the fourth year of comparable data. Thus, the performance of students who were administered the CTBS/S as 3rd graders can be compared to their achievement as 6th graders. Table 7 presents longitudinal data for these students as 3rd graders in 1977 and as 6th graders in 1980.

As can be noted from Table 7, most performance increases were generally of the magnitude of the 3.4 percentage increases for Reading Total and Mathematics Total. Percentage increases for Language Total and Battery Total were 3.6 percent and 3.2 percent, respectively. The largest percentage increase was 7.6 percent in Science, and the lowest increase was 1.9 percent in Social Studies.

Although the two student groups are not identical because of student migration, the groups should be quite comparable. The increase across years gives evidence that South Carolina 6th graders in 1980 are making significant progress as a group when compared with their own performance as 3rd graders in 1977.

Table 7

Comparison of 1977 3rd Grade Performance
with Their Performance as 6th Graders in 1980

Skill Area	Percentages above 50th National Percentile		
	Grade 3 1977	Grade 6 1980	Percentage Increase 1977-80
Reading Total	40.4%	43.8	3.4%
Language Total	43.0%	46.6	3.6%
Mathematics Total	36.4%	39.8	3.4%
Battery Total	39.3%	42.5	3.2%
Science	43.0%	50.6	7.6%
Social Studies	43.9%	45.8	1.9%

Appendix A

Summary of the Results of the
1979-80 South Carolina Statewide Testing Program

Table 1

Test Scores for South Carolina Students
Grades 3, 6, and 11
Spring, 1980

Grade	Student Group	Statistic[b]	National Norm	South Carolina						
				Reading	Language	Mathematics	Battery Total	Reference Skills	Science	Social Studies
3	All Students (n=48,873)[a]	Median GE	3.7	3.6	3.7	3.6	3.6	NA[d]	3.7	3.6
		Mean SS		374.3	409.3	359.5	348.8	NA[d]	395.8	392.7
		Median NP	50	47.4	50.5	46.5	47.4	NA[d]	50.8	48.2
	Title I Students (n=10,049)[a]	Median GE	NA[c]	2.3	2.5	2.9	2.6	NA[d]	2.4	2.5
		Mean SS	NA[c]	312.1	345.0	320.9	286.1	NA[d]	329.5	335.9
		Median NP	NA[c]	16.6	19.9	23.6	17.6	NA[d]	20.5	21.9
6	All Students (n=45,700)[a]	Median GE	6.7	6.3	6.3	6.1	6.2	7.4	6.8	6.0
		Mean SS		475.5	482.4	453.8	455.3	519.2	489.9	483.7
		Median NP	50	45.6	46.2	43.2	43.7	56.7	50.7	45.4
	Title I Students (n=9,215)[a]	Median GE	NA[c]	4.0	4.0	4.8	4.2	4.4	4.3	4.2
		Mean SS	NA[c]	394.4	414.2	397.1	377.1	429.2	419.1	411.5
		Median NP	NA[c]	16.8	20.6	20.4	17.1	24.2	22.8	20.1
11	All Students (n=40,288)[a]	Median GE	11.7	10.5	10.6	10.1	10.4	10.8	11.0	11.1
		Mean SS		603.2	587.2	572.5	597.0	630.4	590.7	599.0
		Median NP	50	35.3	39.4	37.3	33.9	41.4	42.8	44.4

[a] n=Total number of students completing any part of the test battery.

[b] GE=Grade Equivalent
SS=Scale Score
NP=National Percentile

[c] CTBS/S national norms are not available for Title I students.

[d] There is no Reference Skills Test on Level C for the CTBS/S.

Table 2

Percentages of South Carolina Students in Each Quarter on the National Normative Distribution
Grades 3, 6, and 11
Spring, 1980

Grade	Student Group	National Percentiles[b]	South Carolina						
			Reading	Language	Mathematics	Battery Total	Reference Skills	Social Science	Studies
3	All Students (n=48,873)[a]	76-99	20.2	23.0	16.4	18.6	NA[c]	25.6	24.1
		51-75	26.6	27.0	28.5	26.3	NA[c]	25.6	24.8
		26-50	22.5	24.3	31.5	29.0	NA[c]	22.3	24.4
		1-25	30.7	25.8	23.7	26.1	NA[c]	26.5	26.7
	Title I Students (n=10,049)[a]	76-99	.9	1.3	.6	.5	NA[c]	2.8	2.5
		51-75	6.8	8.7	8.7	4.9	NA[c]	12.0	10.8
		26-50	22.2	28.4	36.4	30.4	NA[c]	25.5	29.9
		1-25	70.0	61.6	54.2	64.2	NA[c]	59.6	56.8
6	All Students (n=45,709)[a]	76-99	20.5	22.3	16.0	19.4	27.7	22.9	22.3
		51-75	23.3	24.3	23.8	23.1	25.0	27.7	23.5
		26-50	28.3	27.5	34.0	28.2	24.7	24.6	28..
		1-25	27.9	26.0	26.2	29.3	22.6	24.8	25.6
	Title I Students (n=9,215)[a]	76-99	.9	1.2	.5	.4	3.3	1.9	1.4
		51-75	4.9	7.1	4.8	3.4	11.9	11.6	7.0
		26-50	26.7	30.5	35.2	25.1	33.0	30.9	32.2
		1-25	67.6	61.2	59.5	71.1	51.8	55.6	59.4
11	All Students (n=40,288)[a]	76-99	16.4	19.6	16.0	15.7	16.8	17.0	17.1
		51-75	19.6	21.8	18.6	17.9	24.7	25.6	26.0
		26-50	24.5	22.2	27.9	26.2	28.1	22.9	27.3
		1-25	39.6	36.4	37.5	40.1	30.4	34.6	29.7

[a]n=Total number of students completing any part of the test battery.

[b]GE=Grade Equivalent
SS=Scale Score
NP=National Percentile

Corrected

[c]There is no Reference Skills Test on Level C of the CTBS/S.

Table 3

Comparison of 1977, 1978, 1979, and 1980 Results of the South Carolina Statewide Testing Program All Students

Grade		Reading				Language				Mathematics				Battery Total				Reference Skills				Science				Social Studies			
		1977	1978	1979	1980	1977	1978	1979	1980	1977	1978	1979	1980	1977	1978	1979	1980	1977	1978	1979	1980	1977	1978	1979	1980	1977	1978	1979	1980
3	%	40.9	44.4	45.3	46.8	43.4	46.2	48.1	50.0	36.6	41.4	44.3	44.9	39.6	42.2	44.8	44.9	NA	NA	NA	NA	43.4	47.7	NA[a]	51.2	44.2	46.3	48.3	48.9
	GE	3.4	3.5	3.5	3.6	3.4	3.5	3.6	3.7	3.4	3.5	3.6	3.6	3.4	3.5	3.6	3.6	NA	NA	NA	NA	3.3	3.5	NA[a]	3.7	3.4	3.5	3.6	3.6
6	%	38.0	39.7	42.7	43.8	41.8	43.0	45.4	46.6	32.4	34.8	38.5	39.8	36.7	38.3	41.5	42.5	45.5	47.2	51.1	52.7	45.5	47.9	50.7	50.6	40.9	41.6	45.1	45.8
	GE	5.8	5.9	6.2	6.3	5.8	5.9	6.1	6.3	5.7	5.9	6.0	6.1	5.7	5.8	6.1	6.2	6.6	6.6	7.2	7.4	6.3	6.3	6.8	6.8	5.7	5.7	6.0	6.0
11	%	36.8	35.8	36.4	36.0	40.5	40.1	40.9	41.4	32.6	32.4	33.7	34.6	33.1	32.6	33.5	33.6	41.4	40.8	41.6	41.5	40.3	41.3	42.3	42.6	41.9	41.9	42.6	43.1
	GE	10.5	10.5	10.5	10.5	10.8	10.6	10.6	10.6	9.9	10.0	10.1	10.1	10.3	10.2	10.3	10.4	10.8	10.8	10.8	10.8	10.4	10.4	11.0	11.0	11.1	11.1	11.1	11.1

[a]State Science data are not available at Grade 3.

1 2 3 4
5 6 7 8

1 - Percentage above 50th national percentile in 1977.
2 - Percentage above 50th national percentile in 1978.
3 - Percentage above 50th national percentile in 1979.
4 - Percentage above 50th national percentile in 1980.
5 - Median grade equivalent score in 1977.
6 - Median grade equivalent score in 1978.
7 - Median grade equivalent score in 1979.
8 - Median grade equivalent score in 1980.